

Amendments to the Drawings:

Attached are replacement sheets for Figures 1 and 7-14 of the drawings. These drawings have been amended to simply add in reference numerals 19(1)-19(16) as set forth in the remarks section below. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments.

REMARKS

Applicants have amended the specification as set forth above, amended FIGS. 1 and 7-14 to add reference numerals 19(1)-19(16), cancelled claims 2 and 13, amended claims 1, 3-8, 11, 12, 14-19 and 22, and added new claims 25 and 26 as set forth above. Support for the amendments to the drawings and the specification can be found, *inter alia*, in originally filed FIGS. 1, 4, 5, and 7-14 and paragraphs 31, 35, 39, 43, 47, 51, and 55 of the above-identified patent application to simply identify the mating interfaces 19(1)-19(16) which are clearly illustrated. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments. Applicants respectfully request clarification from the Office with respect to the status of claims 13 and 23. For purposes of this response, Applicants have assumed the Office intended to reject claim 23 based on Winkler even though the first sentence of paragraph 4 does not recite claim 23 as being rejected and did not intend to reject claim 13 based on US Patent No. 3,654,586 to Winkler (Winkler) since no basis for this rejection based on Winkler is set forth in the Office Action. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the outstanding office action is respectfully requested.

The Office has objected to the last three lines of claims 1 and 12 asserting that it is unclear how the electrical contact spaced from an opening to the interface passage at a distance will prevent the electrical connection between the contact and a conductor at the opening to the passage. The Office suggests these claims would be better understood if amended to recite the electrical contact is spaced in from an opening to the interface passage at a distance to prevent accidentally an electrical connection between the electrical contact and a conductor at the opening to the interface passage. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 12 in accordance with the Office's suggestion. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this objection.

The Office has rejected claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 11-16, 18-20 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 3,654,586 to Winkler (Winkler). The Office asserts that Winkler discloses in figure 1 a connector with: a housing (10); one or more interface passages (24, 26) formed in the housing (10), each of the interface passages (24, 26) having an outer perimeter (circumference of end 24, 26), wherein at least one portion of the outer perimeter (circumference of end 24, 26) is spaced in or spaced out shown in figure 2 from at least one adjacent portion of the outer perimeter (circumference of end of 24, 26); one or more connector passages (the rear through hole passages connected to interface passage

24, 26, and adjacent ends cable 18, 18') formed in the housing (10), each of the connector passages (the rear through hole passages connected to interface passage 24, 26, and adjacent ends cable 18, 18') is connected to one of the interface passages (24, 26), and an electrical contact (16) is seated in each of the one or more interface passages (24, 26), is spaced from an opening (30) to each of the interface passages (24, 26), and extends in to the connector passage (the rear through hole passages connected to interface passage 24, 26, and adjacent ends cable 18, 18'); the electrical contact (16) is spaced in from an opening (A) to the interface passage (24, 26) at a distance (B) to prevent (accidentally at first hit) an electrical connection between the electrical contact (16) and a (mating) conductor at the opening (A) to the interface passage (24, 26) (attachment 1).

Winkler does not disclose or suggest, "wherein multiple portions of the outer perimeter are spaced in or spaced out from a portion of the outer perimeter adjacent each of the multiple portions" as recited in claim 1 and 12. Applicants have substantially amended dependent claim 2 into claim 1 and dependent claim 13 into claim 12. As the Office has acknowledged by not rejecting claims 2 and 13 in view of Winkler, Winkler does not disclose or suggest multiple portions of the outer perimeter which are spaced in or spaced out from adjacent portions. Accordingly, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 12. Since claims 3-5, 7-9, 11, and 23 depend from and contain the limitations of claim 1 and claims 14-16, 18-20, and 24 depend from and contain the limitations of claim 12, they are distinguishable over the cited references and are patentable in the same manner as claims 1 and 12.

Winkler does not disclose or suggest, "a portion of the interface passage spaced in from an opening to the interface passage has a keying configuration which differs from a keying configuration of the interface passage at the opening, wherein the interface passage is continuous" as recited in claim 11 or "forming a portion of the interface passage spaced in from an opening to the interface passage to have a keying configuration which differs from a keying configuration of the interface passage at the opening, wherein the interface passage is continuous" as recited in claim 22. The Office's attention is respectfully directed to FIGS. 2 and 3 and col. 1, lines 66 and 75 in Winkler which state that the openings 38, 38' refer to each of the openings between the inner ends 40, 40' of the partition walls and the inner walls 36, 36' which have a dimension of A and A'. The openings 38, 38' are not interface passages as claimed. Additionally, as clearly as shown in FIG. 3 in Winkler the opening 38 for connector 10 and the opening 38' for the connector 12 each has the same outer dimensions along its entire length. As described in paragraph 60 in the above-identified

patent application, another advantage of embodiments of the present invention is that, “Additional configurations within the passages can be used for additional keying combinations, thus multiplying the mating combinations for additional voltage, circuit, or specific application versions.” As a result, very precise keying between proper electrical connectors can be assured. Accordingly, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 11 and 22.

The Office has rejected claims 1-3, 6, 12-14 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,383 032 to Gerberding (Gerberding). The Office asserts that Gerberding discloses in figure 1 a connector with: a housing (10); one at-more interface passages (20) formed in the housing (10), each of the interface passages (20) having an outer perimeter (circumference of 20), wherein at least one portion of the outer perimeter (circumference of 20) is spaced in or spaced out shown in figure 1 from at least one adjacent portion of the outer perimeter (circumference of 20); one or more connector passages (the rear through hole passages connected to interface passage 20, and adjacent to the rear end where contact located) (figure 5) formed in the housing (10), each of the connector passages (the rear through hole passages connected to interface passage 20, and adjacent to the rear end where contact located) is connected to one of the interface passages (20), and an electrical contact (rectangular dot line in figure 5) is seated in each of the one or more interface passages (20), is spaced from an opening (adjacent to 30) to each of the interface passages (20), and extends in to the connector passage (the rear through hole passages connected to interface passage 20, and adjacent to the rear end where contact located).

Gerberding does not disclose or suggest, “one or more mating interfaces adjacent the one or more interface passages, wherein each of the mating interfaces has an outer perimeter which has substantially the same shape as the outer perimeter of the adjacent one of the interface passages” as recited in claim 1 or “forming one or more mating interfaces adjacent the one or more interface passages, wherein each of the mating interfaces has an outer perimeter which has substantially the same shape as the outer perimeter of the adjacent one of the interface passages” as recited in claim 12. The Office’s attention is respectfully directed to FIGS. 1 and 2 in Gerberding which clearly illustrate that the portion above the first uptake chamber 20 does not have substantially the same shape as the outer perimeter of the adjacent chamber 20.

As described in paragraph 6 in the above-identified patent application, the present invention provides a power connector with a keyed configuration to assure proper connection of a particular power source. With the substantially same outer shape for the

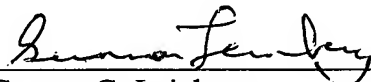
outer perimeter of the interface passage and the mating interface in a connector, it is easier to identify a matching connector for mating purposes. Accordingly, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Office is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 12. Since claims 2, 3, and 6 depend from and contain the limitations of claim 1 and claims 13, 14, and 17 depend from and contain the limitations of claim 12, they are distinguishable over the cited references and are patentable in the same manner as claims 1 and 12.

Applicants have also added new dependent claims 25 and 26. None of the cited references, alone or in combination are believed to disclose or suggest a portion of each of the at least two interface passages spaced in from an opening to each of the interface passages has a keying configuration which differs from a keying configuration of each of the interface passages at the opening. Accordingly, these claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

In view of all of the foregoing, applicant submits that this case is in condition for allowance and such allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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